

REQUEST BY THE MAYOR'S OFFICE TO IMPLEMENT A COMPSTAT TYPE PROCESS FOR THE LOS ANGELES FIRE DEPARTMENT

In March 2012, I was requested by the Mayor's office to assist the Los Angeles Fire Department with the implementation of a CompStat type process. The CompStat inspection process was put into place within the Los Angeles Police Department in 2002. The LAPD CompStat process was very successful, resulting in crime reductions dating back to the 1960's. The process involves using existing data generated by the department. This data includes crime and arrest, personnel complaints, calls for service and all other data fields available to the department. By displaying these different data fields in an easy and readable format, a Chief Executive of any public safety organization can easily manage and make real-time decisions on how to run his/her organization.

The Four Distinct Principles of the CompStat Process

- I. Accurate and Timely Intelligence*
- II. Effect Tactics
- III. Rapid Deployment
- IV. Relentless Follow-Up and Assessment

*At the core of the CompStat process is the ability to analysis data that is accurate and has been tested and verified, to make sure the data and systems used for the analysis is without errors or omissions. ¹Critical to that process is a system that ensures that the data to be analyzed is as accurate as possible. Without the ability to use accurate data, the process will fail. The most important stage before a CompStat rollout is to make sure all data used is accurate. Without this process, the use of false data can cause distrust among members of the community that you serve. This will also cause distrust among the members of the department that you are inspecting. When they know you are not confident about your data, it will make for a non-productive process.

Background

Every Police Department is required to report their crimes to the Uniform Crime Reporting Committee. Most departments are judged in the community as to the success or lack thereof concerning crime reduction. The data is then retrieved from various department data bases and used to populate the profiles. These profiles are then updated weekly and used during the pre-scheduled CompStat meetings. The profiles or report cards are the platform that is used to inspect the processes.

During the implementation of the LAPD CompStat process in 2002, and under the direction of then Chief William Bratton, an extensive audit was completed of the crime and arrest data used

¹ Both the data and computer software used has to be verified for its accuracy.

by the department.² The findings showed that the department needed to change both the policies and procedures related to crime and arrest reporting. Both computer and human errors were discovered. Various checks and balances were put into place and training was given and completed to Command staff, Detectives and Crime Analysis personnel.

Unlike the police department, the LAFD is judged on success or lack thereof as it relates to response times. Due to the fact that the department most often responds from a station type location, deployment is based on National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards. These standards are contained on the NFPA website and are pre-set time response goals for various aspects of the call processing and responses to emergency calls for service. It must be noted that the response goals are guidelines and not governmental regulations. Throughout the country, fire departments use various types of measurements as it relates to response times. Some departments use the NFPA guidelines and some departments use standard average response times as indicators of successful deployment.

Prior to 2009, the LAFD used Crystal Reports, which are pre-programed reports published by department employees assigned to the department's information technology section. The reports contain various types of data sets, including response times and fire incidents counts. Members of the department's planning section would then consolidate this data in a readable form and publish quarterly statistics for the command staff. Because the reports were programed by employees assigned to the IT section of the department, there was a delay in obtaining the information and the statistical report would take time to produce. The reports could not be compiled in a timely fashion.

The data used for these reports would be retrieved from the Computer Automated Dispatch System (CAD). The CAD data is made up of time stamps compiled during the handling of an emergency call. All events involving the call are tracked and stored for further analysis and use. Events such as the time the call is received by the 911 operator, and the length of time it takes the operator to dispatch the call to the emergency fire unit. Also the time it takes the unit to acknowledge the call and respond to the scene of the emergency. Various measurements used by the NFPA standards are contained within the time stamps of the 911 call (See Below).

Time E911-TimeDisp

TimeToHosp-TimeAtHosp

TimeDisp-TimeEnrte

TimeAtHospTimeInServ

TimeDisp-TimeOnScene

TimeDisp-TimeInServ

TimeEnrte-TimeOnScene

² The LAPD worked with the UCR committee to change their reporting as it relates to Domestic Violence reports which were classified as aggravated assaults.

Each of the time stamps within the NFPA guidelines are certain pre-set time response goals which fire departments attempt to achieve.

In 2009 the LAFD entered into an agreement with Deccan International, to purchase software which allowed the department to analysis data such as response times, along with modeling CAD data for deployment purposes. The department convened various work groups to set up the transition of using call data within the Deccan software. **At the time of this report documentation as to the process and procedures used by the department have not been validated and or located.**

The department uses various types of information to deploy resources but the main analytical software system used is the Deccan software. By using the software the department is able to quickly look at response times and input various types of data to look at deployment issues. Once the software was brought online and personnel were trained, the department started using the software system. The department also continued to use the crystal reports for other statistical questions. This allowed the department to use two systems at the same time to look at response time issues. **Note-these two systems are being used for response time reporting to the Fire Commission and other City Council committees.**

As requested by the Mayor's office and the Fire Chief, I have been tasked with the implementation of a CompStat type inspection process for the department. While working with the department to construct such a process, the department has been hindered by media reports of misrepresentation of data as it relates to deployment issues. This issue came to light during Fire Commission and City Council hearings within the last several months. The issue at hand is whether the department used data that was inaccurate or not clearly explained during department presentations to various governmental bodies.

The department has also been tasked with supplying data to both the LA Times and the Controller's office. Both are analyzing the data and will be publishing their own findings as to the response times of department resources.

Below is a summary of my initial findings and recommendations as it relates to my first 30 days with the LAFD, along with a status update of possible issues at hand which could delay the implementation of a CompStat type inspection process.

Response data contained within both the CAD reports and the Deccan software.

My initial assessments of both systems reveal that there is a problem with the calculations of the response times. When both systems are run using the same criteria, different response time data is produced. Both the CAD and Deccan software should produce the same results. I along with members of the department's IT staff have met with Deccan to understand the issues. Further analysis has shown that both systems could possibly be using different criteria when running queries. During the initial planning stages with the Deccan system, the criteria programed within

the system and used to run the crystal reports should have been same. ³Preliminary findings show that this is not the case at this time. This is based on not only my observation, but information obtained from members of the department. Additionally, I am not confident that the data represented by the Department's reports is accurate until further research is concluded. I have had several conversations with Deccan and will continue to work with them to determine the extent of the problem. ⁴This concern was also noted in an audit conducted by the Controller's office, in January 2002.

Recommendation: Continue to work with Deccan and LAFD IT to determine whether the response time data is accurate. Continue to work on comparing the files within both systems and running tests of data via the query process. Note-until this process is completed, putting a CompStat process together is not possible, because the response time data will be the main foundation of the CompStat process.

Status: Dialogue between Deccan and the LAFD is ongoing. Within the next 2 weeks the systems will be audited and corrected concerning the difference between the Cad system and Deccan system. Testing will then begin to determine success of system adjustments.

Use of the Deccan software.

The Deccan system uses files transferred from the CAD system into the Deccan software. Once the files are updated within the system, call response queries can be performed. Additionally the system uses that same data to run modeling queries for deployment purposes. Upon testing the modeling data component, it revealed that the modeling portion of the system was not producing accurate percentages as it related to deployment queries. This was pointed out to Deccan who is looking into the possible problems. Deccan was also made aware that the system needs to be updated with new calibrated files which Deccan is responsible for providing.

The software is very robust and can allow for many unique and specific queries to be performed. My observations of fire department personnel who use the system, is that more training should be conducted for LAFD staff. This assessment is made due to the request of staff to have more training on the system.

Recommendation: Continue to work with Deccan to look into and fix the modeling problem with the software. Deccan is also willing to provide additional training for fire department staff. I will continue to work with Deccan to re-design the query process, and make it much for user friendly. ⁵Until such time, the Deccan software application should not be used for any further analysis.

³ These findings occurred during conference calls with Deccan and Fire Department staff.

⁴ Controller's Report January 31, 2002. Unable to locate the Department's response to the Response Times Validation report.

⁵ The Crystal reports can still be used for data analysis.

Status: Deccan is aware of the issues brought to their attention. The department is waiting for a response from Deccan as to the problem and solution to the issues.

LA Times/Controller's Office audit of crime response data.

Both the LA Times and the City Controller's office has requested and obtained CAD response data from 2007 through the 2012. Both entities are preparing their findings and will publish their results within the next couple of months. Unfortunately because both entities are not using Deccan software to query the data the results could be different than what the department has published. ⁶Several conversations have occurred with both parties to assist them in understanding the data and the process in which the department used in their queries.

Recommendation: Continue to work with both parties for a mutual understanding as to how the data was queried. This will allow for a timely and proper response from the department after the Controller and the Times have published their findings.

Status: The department will re-run all of the data that was presented to the public and city agencies.

Design and Rollout of a performance management process (CompStat), for the LAFD.

In order to establish the CompStat process all data that is used by the LAFD should be audited for the accuracy and timelessness of the product. This includes risk management, overtime and any other data that will be used for the process. At this time, there are two sworn employees who are assigned to the planning section who are responsible for running the system. Both employees are assigned to the unit due to operational necessity. Both have limited training and understanding of the data analysis process. This is due because they were placed in the position for which they were not originally trained to handle. Most of the training occurred on the job, with little or no follow up training. Additionally there are many other supervisors who are engaged in developing other areas of technology related to data analysis. This is problematic when everyone is not on the same page.

Recommendation: Realign areas of responsibility to bring together all areas of the department who have responsibility for data analysis. This includes personnel who run the crystal reports assigned to the communication center. At this time other areas of the department are researching other software programs without one point of contact. A realignment of resources and responsibility is needed as soon as possible.

Develop and Publish rules and regulations as it relates to analysis of any data within the department. Have one point of contact and one Command structure.

⁶ Both the Controller's office and the LA Times have been informed of the possible problems with not using the same systems to analysis the data.

Establish a CompStat type unit with at least two civilian personnel who can be functionally supervised by a superior officer, but ultimately report to the Fire Chief. This takes all the guess work out of what type of analysis should be done.

Work with the Chief to establish the structure and define how the performance management process will be conducted.

Status: The department is working to address these issues.

The fire department is made up of very dedicated and committed people who serve their community on a daily basis. The Fire Chief is very committed to a performance management system, and understands the importance of accurate data. Chief Cummings has been very cooperative and has made his staff available for my assistance. The Chief understands the importance of making sure the data is accurate before any CompStat type process can occur.

This is my 30 day initial assessment of the Fire Department's response time data along with the issues which at this time delay the roll out of a CompStat type process for the LAFD. All areas of concern within this document continue to be examined on a daily basis and any change in their status will be documented and reported in a timely manner.

Respectfully, Jeff Godown